

HYMNS OF HELP AND HOPE

EDWARD AUGUSTUS RAND



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S. A. Rand

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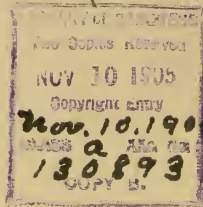
BY

Edward Augustus Rand



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EDWARD AUGUSTUS RAND, son of Edward and Caroline (Paul) Rand, was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, April 5, 1837, and died in Watertown, Massachusetts, October 5, 1903.

In this space of sixty-five years was a life that existed only to bless others.

He was educated in the public schools of his native city, graduated with honors from Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine; and, after successful teaching for two years, he studied theology.

He was ordained pastor of the Amesbury and Salisbury Mills Village Church, Massachusetts, March 2, 1865. In October of that year he married a former scholar, Mary F. Abbott, of Norridgewock, Maine.

He became pastor of the E Street Church, South Boston, Massachusetts, in May, 1867,

and of the Congregational Church in Franklin, of the same State, in 1876.

It was during this pastorate he decided he could not honestly remain in a denomination where the examination of a ministerial candidate might insist upon a belief in eternal punishment.

While realizing the awful nature of sin, he could not escape the conviction of final restoration, agreeing thus with Tennyson:

“Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defeats of doubt, and taints of blood.”

He found liberty of thought in the Episcopal Church, while urging Christianity passionately as ever.

It was hard to break from the Congregational denomination, but he did not lose his old friends.

A remarkable proof of this was the yearly reunion with his old parishioners of the E Street Church, South Boston. They met year

after year to greet him in the old place, as long as he lived.

After entering the Episcopal Church, he labored with all his might to extend its influence. His nature responded with loving devotion to the saints' days and the festivals of the Church. As at home, successive birthdays were made the glad days of the year, so in the Church, the days of special observance were never forgotten by him.

He labored with acceptance in Christ Church, Hyde Park. Then he solicited funds which resulted in the building of Trinity Church, Concord, Massachusetts; All Saints, Belmont; and the Church of the Good Shepherd, Watertown. He had also secured the purchase money for a lot for Saint Mary's of Waverley when Death grasped the weary hands and folded them to rest.

He had been no less busy as an author. Over fifty volumes for young people that he published were widely circulated in this country, and some of his breezy books for boys were reprinted in England.

He wrote extensively for the journals of the

day, to which the compiler of these hymns would make direct acknowledgment, if it were possible.

Mr. Rand received so many appreciative words of the helpfulness of his writings from strangers that it was his intention to extend the influence of the little verses which he had named *Hymns of Help and Hope*.

MARY F. ABBOTT RAND.

HYMNS OF HELP AND HOPE

1. *We Thank Thee.*
2. *The Ship in the Sunshine.*
3. *A Little Land-Locked Bay.*
4. *Our Easter Dead.*
5. *On the Other Side of the Mist.*
6. *Who Was It?*
7. *The First Blue-bird.*
8. *Who Feeds the Sparrows?*
9. *The Joy of Easter.*
10. *The Anemone.*
11. *The Easter Tomb.*
12. *"Is It Far?"*
13. *In the Nest.*
14. *The Arbutus at the West.*
15. *A Lamb's Hymn.*
16. *A Little While in Prayer.*
17. *Over the Bridge.*
18. *All, All at Home To-night.*

19. *Where do the Children Go?*
20. *Harvest Hymn.*
21. *The Fording of the River.*
22. *The Angel World.*
23. *Climbing the Stairs at Night.*
24. *Gone.*
25. *My Pilot.*
26. *The Old Bell-buoy.*
27. *My Ships are In.*
28. *Under the Wings.*
29. *Autumn Glory.*
30. *St. Michael and All Angels.*
31. *Mother in the Door.*
32. *The Guide.*
33. *Angels about My Bed.*
34. *Sunset.*
35. *Night.*
36. *The Old Bell-buoy at Whale's Back.*
37. *Pond Lilies.*
38. *The Bells of Heaven.*
39. *The Smell of the Sea.*
40. *The Old Tide Mill.*
41. *Tenting by the Sea.*
42. *The Battle-Front.*
43. *Advent Winds.*

44. *The Little Ships in the Air.*
45. *Where Christmas Angels Sing.*
46. *My Dear Ones.*
47. *A New Year's Need.*
48. *Almost Home.*
49. *The Christmas Guest.*
50. *The Pilgrim in the Valley.*
51. *At Last.*

WE THANK THEE

For sun, and also shadow-time,
For darkness and the day,
Our Father-God, we give Thee thanks
And trust Thy love always.

The love that leads through paths of shade
Or those that feel the sun;
In level ways, or those that toil
And o'er the mountains run.

Such ways slope off and up to God,
The earth is left afar;
The silence of the sky is ours,
And ours the morning star.

For sun and darkness, heat and shade,
We give our thanks to Thee,
From whom come rest and strength and hope,
And angels' company!

THE SHIP IN THE SUNSHINE

Across the sands strange darkness fell:
The sun had dipped behind a cloud;
The waves now sullenly swept on,
The surf fast whitened to a shroud.

And shadows, too, fell on our hearts,
When, lo! beyond the waves' dark run,
We saw a ship far out to sea —
A ship slow sailing in the sun!

O ship far out to sea, sail on!
Some heart upon a darkened shore
Will see with joy thy whitening sails,
And fear the deepening gloom no more.

O souls that move amid the light,
Move on across life's cloudy sea!
For many will take heart by you
And cry, "The sun will come to me!"

A LITTLE LAND-LOCKED BAY

I know a little land-locked bay,
For souls upon a stormy sea;
What light on all the hills around,
What song of birds in every tree!

No billows roll, no rocks do rend,
No wildly wrecking winds are there,
But tiny ripples whisper "Peace!"
That little land-locked bay is Prayer.

OUR EASTER DEAD

As when the streaming light
Through rich cathedral pane
Of azure, crimson, gold—
A flow of tinted rain—

Arrays in kingly robes
The humble saints of yore,—
So Memory paints with hues
From heaven's jeweled store,

Transfigures old-time friends
Once lowly to the eye!
Sweet tribute to our dead,
Our dead that never die!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIST

How dense and drear this April mist
That hides the busy seaport town;
I see no roof, I trace no street,
O'er all the chilling vapor's frown.
Yet ever through this cloudy veil
Life's voices pierce and fill the air;
I hear the bells at twilight hour,
They softly call my soul to prayer.
I hear the merry shout and laugh
Of little children at their play;
And know, though all is hid from me,
That life goes on, by night, by day.
My lonely soul, 'tis but a veil
Between the walls of Heaven and thee;
And from that other side come sounds
As sweet as far-off bells at sea.
Fair angels sing, dear children call;
I hear, although I may not see,
O Goodly City of our God,
With gates of pearl so near to me!
And blest the angel hands of death
That draw for me this veil of mist,
And show the lengthening street of gold
And stream of sparkling amethyst.

WHO WAS IT?

Who found the Saviour's empty tomb
All in the gray, gray morning?
And who was it that sped away
To give the happy warning?

One very great or strong of earth?
One skilled in Jewish story?
Some wise man from an ancient school
With locks and beard so hoary?

No priest or king, no sage or seer
With grave and mystic presage,
No Aaron, Daniel, Solomon,
Bu Mary, gave the message;

Sweet Mary, wise and great in love,
At Jesus' feet low lying:
She followed him to Calvary
And stood by him when dying.

Then speed away, each loving heart!
Tell, tell the Easter story,
That Christ for all threw open wide
A door to fadeless glory!

THE FIRST BLUE-BIRD

Across the wintry fields what song
To sad and weary hearts is brought?
What marvel is it for mine ears,
What miracle for mortals wrought?

Ah, warbler on that apple bough,
I know why thou dost blithely sing:
Beyond the shroud-like snow to-day,
Thine eyes behold the nearing Spring.

Then sing again, thou bonny bird,
Pour forth thy sweetest, richest strain!
The summer sky is in thy hues,
God's faith within thy tiny brain.

Bright messenger of hope, teach me!
I need your simple faith to-day,
To care not for the driving storm,
But wait, and trust, and sing alway.

Let me beyond this chilling earth
O'ershadowed by the tempest's wing,
Behold the fields of "living green"
And hail God's everlasting Spring!

WHO FEEDS THE SPARROWS?

Little brown sparrows upon the tree,
Sweetly chirping in your glee,
Where will you get your breakfast, this morn ?
 “Tu-wee,—tu-wee!
 Tu-wee,—tu-wee!”

Frozen the meadows, this wintry day
Not a crumb, nor a seed do I see;
Where will you get your dinner, at noon ?
 “Tu-wee,—tu-wee!
 Tu-wee,—tu-wee!”

Not a bud anywhere, nor a leaf;
Stripped of fruit is every tree.
Where will you get your supper to-night ?
 “Tu-wee,—tu-wee!
 Tu-wee,—tu-wee!”

Then, with a rush, with a whirl of wings,
Every breast from worry free,
Rising, they soar, and each one doth sing,
 “My Heavenly Father,
 He feedeth me.”

THE JOY OF EASTER

What loving gifts had Mary brought
For Jesus sadly sleeping,
When, lo! she found an empty tomb!
Oh, fast was then her weeping!
But soon what proof a gentle voice
Of life and love was giving;
He called her "Mary" — O what joy
To know her Lord was living.

When we before the grave's dark door
In tears are lowly lying,
O Jesus, thou who hast such love,
Hast proved it by thy dying,
May faith but hear thy gracious voice
Its pledge of pity giving,
And we believe that now in Thee
Our dead again are living.

THE ANEMONE

Anemone, so fair, so sweet,
Thy white with pink was flushed,
Like flake of snow that tried to live,
Like cherub-cheek that blushed.

They called thee wind-flower, and they said
Thy name had meaning rare,
Because the wind had helped thee bloom,
A tempest made thee fair!

Thou pure, white bloom from forest dark,
Thou teacher of the Spring,
Let me from out thy casket rich
This jeweled lesson bring.

Was it the wind that helped thee blow
That oped each snowy flake?
It is the storm which mortals fear
That helps immortals make.

I can but think how fair is heaven
With bloom — now vainly sought —
That winds of earth so chill and harsh
To its perfection wrought.

THE EASTER TOMB

Sleep, sleep, dear Lord, oh, sweetly sleep,
And dreamless be Thy rest!
Thy hands, as if in thanks for peace,
Lie folded on Thy breast.

And you, his friends, bring leaves of palm,
Bring lilies white and fair,
And scatter all about his bed,
A king in state lies there.

Then let them close the tomb who will,
Roll here this largest stone,
Bring too a guard, and for a seal
Take haughty Pilate's own!

But in the morning Christ will rise;
He will death's fetters break,
And for his loved ones straight to heaven
A shining pathway make.

‘IS IT FAR?’*

“How far may it be to the heavenly land?
How far to the city that needs no sun?
How far to the beautiful Gates of Pearl?
How far to the waters that crystal run?

“All day, the day long, are there hills to climb?
And what of the rivers that I must cross?
And tell me, oh, tell me, if storms may rise?
And what of the seas where the billows toss?”

Oh, short is the way to the heavenly land!
And never a child on that way was lost;
No mountains to clamber or seas to sail,
But only a stream that one steps across.

“The way is so dark that I fear to start —
I long for a friend who will go before!
The waters are wild and so white with foam,
I long for a friend who will take me o’er.”

There, little one, hush! there’s a Friend for you,
And oft has He crossed when the waters roared!
And soft are His arms where you lie at rest,
While quickly the stream will the Saviour ford.

*As a little child that lay dying heard of the heavenly land, she asked “Is it far?”

Oh, short is the way to the heavenly land!
'Tis only a step through the water's foam;
And now you must go — with this farewell kiss,
Good night, little pilgrim, you'll soon reach
home!

IN THE NEST

How many wee birds that peep
Under the wings, under the wings;
And sweet is the lullaby-tune
That mother-bird over them sings.

Storm-rocked is the nest at night,
Slenderly hung, slenderly hung;
But tender the breast in its warmth
That covers the slumbering young.

Dear Saviour, this truth I learn,
Oft as I sleep, oft as I sleep:
That under Thy shadowing wings
A child in his trembling may creep.

My soul in the storms of life
Sad as it sings, sad as it sings,
A bird it would be that shall hide
Safe under Thy sheltering wings.

THE ARBUTUS AT THE WEST

Thou Pilgrim-flower, far from home,
Dost thou not miss the great blue sea?
Its surf so like the drifted snow,
Its voice that says "Eternity"?

New England wears thee for its crown,
And all men give thee honored place;
Thy breath is like heaven's censers sweet,
A star is in thy lovely face.

Leaves in a book thy petals are,
That tell of other, distant days,
Of men who walked by faith in God,
With love for truth and righteous ways.

O Pilgrim-flower, far from home,
Go north and south and east and west,
Till with the beauty of thy bloom
Our wide, wide fatherland be blest.

Thy snow-white petals flushed with morn
Like lifted sails of vessels be,
A vessel bearing righteousness
Thou *Mayflower* of the stormy sea.

A LAMB'S HYMN

Dear Saviour may a timid lamb
Make in thine ear its plea?
What friend have I in earth or heaven
So kind as Thou to me?

I fear the day — its fields so new,
Its paths that none can know:
If Thou but take the lead, dear Lord,
In safety I shall go.

Thou art the Shadow of a Rock
When noon may burn the land;
Thy voice the music of a stream
That cools the desert sand.

At night I lay my tired head
Upon Thy loving breast;
Be Thou my fold in life, in death
How sweet, how safe my rest.

A LITTLE WHILE IN PRAYER

A moment, Lord, with Thee in prayer,
A moment on the street!
Amid the whirl, the rush, the roar,
My Saviour I would meet.

A moment 'mid my tangling world;
Right where the wheels at play
Make dizzy now my tired brain —
Just here I stop to pray.

A moment when temptation comes,
When hot I feel the breath
Of him who whispers in my ear
And lures my soul to death.

A moment when my courage fails,
When I am slow to own
That Thou art all, my all on earth,
In heaven, just Thou alone.

One moment, Lord, just one in prayer,
Give rest upon thine arm,
Give strength to speak, give will to do,
And still my soul's alarm.

OVER THE BRIDGE

I watch the people cross the bridge
That ends the village street;
I hear the rumble of the carts,
And tread of passing feet.
I catch the sound of merry laugh
All through this day of June;
These voices in the summer air
Are sweet as any tune.
Beneath the bridge the waters run,
A swift and noisy stream;
And there the river's flow is black
As midnight's ugly dream.
But nothing do the people care;
Those waters run, unseen.
They only watch the fields beyond,
Those fields of blessed green.
Ah me, I say, that midnight stream
Which ends life's pilgrim way!
How many of the Lord's dear flock
Will cross this very day?
But little do they seem to care;
They go with shout and song;
The promises from shore to shore
Have built a bridge so strong.

They have, beneath, a footing firm;
God veils that stream of night;
They only see the City's gates,
And lengthening fields of light.

ALL, ALL AT HOME TO-NIGHT

All, all at home to-night,
Each lamb within the fold.
Without, what sleep or rest
When evening winds are cold?

One, two, — I see their heads,
Each crown of golden hair;
Three, four, — they all are here,
These lambs of mine so fair.

And when death's dark shall come,
And fades this life from sight,
May it be said above,
"All — all at home to-night!"

WHERE DO THE CHILDREN GO?

Where do the children go
When summer winds sing low
To sleeping buds, "Awake,"
That then in beauty break?

Where do the children go
When Autumn, sad and slow,
Comes crowned with garlands red
Around her drooping head?

Where do the children go
When Winter's wand of snow
Stills every singing stream,
Its music but a dream?

The children — they who die?
They lift their wings and fly
To summer-land above,
God's land, His home of love.

HARVEST HYMN

How good 'twill be, the harvest o'er,
As slowly sinks the sun,
To take the sheaves to Christ, and hear
"Well done, dear heart! Well done!"

Each harvest sheaf is safe with Him,
Forever safe, above.
What earth may garner, heaven keeps
As pledge of endless love.

Stay not thy faith! Cease not thy hope,
Thou weary, toiling one!
The reaper's song of home is near,
Thy day is almost done.

Each weary step is heavenward,
God's angels throng thy way;
And death is only but the dawn
Of an eternal day.

THE FORDING OF THE RIVER

There is a river that we must cross
When all our work for the day is done;
The sun goes down and the dark comes on,
We cross the river, but one by one.

A home for all is beyond that stream;
Each one is fair as the gleaner Ruth,
For in his beauty their King they've seen;
Each face reflects his eternal youth.

No wrong is there, and no tears are shed;
None toil for bread when the hours are late;
For all who come there are rooms of rest,
While love keeps ward at an open gate.

"Ah me!" you moan, "I must cross that stream
When shadows fall and the night winds blow."
I know, I know, but a Friend will come
And show the shallows where you may go.

He knows a ford where a child may cross;
His hand he offers to you and me;
And all the way will the Saviour's voice
Make low its music, "I died for thee."

THE ANGEL WORLD

I love to think how Jacob saw,
The sun gone down afar,
A ladder tall and angels bright, —
Each face was like a star.

It was an angel in a cell
That dazzled Peter's sight!
Back fell the gates, to right, to left,
And out he marched that night!

And oh, the host at Bethlehem
That brought to earth our King!
The notes of that ecstatic song
Around the earth still ring.

They throng to-day the paths we tread;
They loose our prison-cares;
They make a Christmas of our praise,
A Bethel of our prayers.

CLIMBING THE STAIRS AT NIGHT

I hear a noise upon the stairs,
A patter soft of feet,
It is a child who, climbing, makes
That music soft and sweet.

I see a light — a shower of gold
Poured from an evening sun?
It is the watchful mother's lamp
That guides her little one.

A weary climb, thou darling child,
To take each tired night,
But soft thy sheltered resting-place,
Thy chamber, warm and bright.

* * * *

No stars to-night, but clouded skies,
Distress, and pain and fears.
O rain, O weary rain without,
Within, a mother's tears!

No little one upon the stairs;
No music, —hark, that moan!
No shower of gold from evening lamp,
The mother goes alone.

But look, O sad and troubled heart,
Above the clouds 'tis light;
Thy child has climbed the heavenly stairs
To God's own mansion bright.

GONE

I miss the hand that pointed out
A heaven of rest from care;
And yet, if here, my soul would lose
The hand that leads it there.

I miss the smile whose constant light
Made bright each clouded place;
And yet, if here, my dreams by night
Would want one sainted face.

I miss the form whose shadow fell
Like sunshine on the floor;
And yet, if here, one angel less
Would hover round my door.

MY PILOT

I have a Pilot and He sails
The rough and roaring sea with me;
That He should guide my bark so mean
Has been Life's sweetest mystery.

My Pilot has five red, red wounds
He in His love received for me;
Wounds in His hands, His feet, His side,
While thorn-prints in His brow I see.

When storm winds from the sullen sky
Across the ocean loud have roared,
My soul has had such restful calm
Because my Pilot was on board.

When in the lonely, awful dark
I heard the breakers threaten wreck,
O music sweet — I caught his step!
And knew my Pilot walked the deck.

And when Life's sea at last is crossed,
My bark in harbor safe shall be;
His be the crown and mine the song,
My Saviour sailed the sea with me.

THE OLD BELL-BUOY

Oh, hark! the old bell-buoy is ringing
Soft and low!
The waves are cradled, gently swinging
To and fro.

A child upon the shore is playing;
A woman laughs while with it straying;
A fisher-boat, the wind delaying
Home would go.

Oh, hark! the old bell-buoy is clanging
As if in pain!
The storm-clouds low their folds are hanging
Black with rain.

The child upon the beach is crying,
In woman's heart all hope is dying,
The boat to reach the shore is trying
All in vain.

MY SHIPS ARE IN

I saw them sail at set of sun
They slowly glided down the bay;
Like mist upon the sea's blue rim,
They sank, dissolved and passed away.

But now at dawn they come once more,
They cross the bar, they rest within!
My heart exultant cries for joy,
"My ships are in, my ships are in!"

I think of friends that went, at death,
Far out to sea, beyond my sight —
They were but vessels sailing on
Till they were lost in depths of night.

I welcome death as dawn that brings
The dearest blessing friends can win,
For I shall have my own and cry
"My ships are in, my ships are in!"

UNDER THE WINGS

Beneath the shadow of Thy wings,
Dear Father, I would rest,
Content to nestle as a bird
That feels the mother's breast.

Why should I fear the dreary storm?
In confidence I sing.
What cares the robin for the rain
When 'neath the mother's wing?

With Thee there is no desert lone,
There is no stormy way;
For Thy protecting presence is
My home, my heaven, to-day.

AUTUMN GLORY

As one who watches from an aisle
Cathedral windows rare,
I stand before the forest trees
And trace the splendors there.

The robes of flame Apostles wear,
The glory round the head;
The light so strange to those on earth
Which shines about our dead;

The staff of gold, the palm of green,
The crook with blood-red stains, —
All these I see as when the sun
Lights up cathedral panes.

And then, with fairer face, is One
Who 'mid Apostles stands,
With crimson on His flowing robes
And crimson on His hands.

Ah! dearest Lord, where'er I go
Upon the land or sea,
All beauty hints of loveliness
That finds its crown in Thee.

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

If we but saw, in darkness,
‘Mid perils bringing dread,
The white tents of God’s angels
Pitched round about our bed;
If we but saw, in sickness,
Amid the fever-pain,
What hands of pity touched us,
Perhaps brought health again;
If we but saw, when struggling
With hosts of sin and shame,
What holy guards stood near us,
Their forms a wall of flame;
If we but saw, when climbing
The crags of duty cold,
What helpers by their presence
Would crown those heights with gold, —
How would life’s burdens lighten
And stars in sorrow’s night
Be prophets of to-morrow’s
Swift-coming, golden light!
Dear Lord, make sharp our vision
That we our help discern,
And see Thine Angels’ footprints
Whichever way we turn.

MOTHER IN THE DOOR

She stood mid the shadows of evening
When my tasks and my play might be o'er;
She lifted her voice in the twilight,
Calling home as she stood in the door.
If thicker the shadows might gather,
Then her lamp she would lovingly bring,
And raise it — a star in the gloaming,
While a song of the home she would sing.
To-night how I long to behold her,
When the day's weary duties are done!
I would that I might in my sorrow
Hear her call at the set of the sun.
Temptations will call and bewilder,
I may stray into storms of the night;
Then O, for the love that will guide me,
And the voice that will lead to the light!
Some day she is coming at sunset,
In the door of God's house she will stand,
Her voice through the shadows soft calling,
And the lamp of God's hope in her hand.
Her child, to her loving arms gathered,
From her bosom no power shall take.
God's love in the home that is golden
Will each cherished one never forsake.

THE GUIDE

Dear child, thy guide is Christ the Lord.
How well He knows the way!
Himself has walked the weary road
That leads to endless day.

Thy guide is Christ; how strong He is!
His arms will give thee rest,
And all thy troubles go to sleep,
Thy head upon His breast.

Thy guide is Christ; his name is Love;
He patient bears with thee.
Wouldst wash the stains from off thy robe,
Oh, look to Calvary.

ANGELS ABOUT MY BED

I cannot see their faces;
I see not any form;
I cannot hear their voices; —
I only hear this storm
That beats upon the window,
That moans far out to sea;
And yet I fear no danger;
The angels are with me.
God's angels, great and holy,
The angels, keen of sight,
Who fly twixt earth and heaven
By every day and night.
Their wings are poised above me
They stand about my bed;
And sweet shall be my slumber,
Their arms beneath my head.
Then beat again, O tempest,
And moan far out to sea!
Roll high your whitening billows!
You bring no fear to me.
My Heavenly Father knoweth
What need I have each night,
And round my bed are watching
His angels in their might.

SUNSET

What blaze of color in the west,
As if the clouds were only heaps
Of jeweled stones, while thro' them all
A flame so clear and golden leaps!

Lo, suddenly a music seems
To fill the wide, wide sky around!
Sweet seraphs sing amid those clouds —
So close is color linked to sound!

NIGHT

O holy angel, Night!
Evangelist of Love!
Thy shining home is near
The throne of God above!

Thy gospels are the heavens
Thick written o'er with stars!
God's love, God's truth expressed
In shining characters.

We read those leaves of blue,
Those words of shining gold;
A resurrection dawns
In hearts long dead and cold.

But glory greater far
Thou teachest us in dreams,
Dost drift our souls in sleep
Down singing crystal streams.

Dear angel of the night,
Disclose Heaven's brighter beams;
O veil our eyes in sleep
And open them in dreams!

THE OLD BELL-BUOY AT WHALE'S BACK

I heard a bell low ringing
As if afar at sea,
Like church bell slowly swinging,
So sweet its melody.

It was the bell-buoy, warning
Of rocks the channel near,
That men have passed on stormy nights,
Their faces pale with fear.

The bell was rocked by gentle seas
That lulled to sleep its clang?
O no; the wrecking reef was there!
The bell its warning rang.

* * * *

I hear a bell loud ringing,
How thick the clouds scud by!
I watch the darkening tempest's wrath
And catch the ocean's cry.

The old bell-buoy is steadfast,
Amid the waves it swings:
It tells of ragged rocks that wreck,
And louder, louder rings!

O souls that care for others,
Like bells that echo far,
In peaceful days the warning give
Of sunken reef or bar.

And when temptations tower,
Like waves upon one spring,
Be quick, be true, your voices raise,
Loud let the bell-buoy ring.

POND LILIES

All through the day the lilies float,
Swayed gently by the drowsy streams,
As tired thoughts in sleep obey
The changing impulse of our dreams.

Through waters dead, who thought such life
Was creeping up the tangled stems,
To burst in bloom of snow and gold
And sprinkle wide those floral gems?

In those dark depths, who thought such light
In folded bud was thus concealed,
To open into stars, with rays
As pure as those by night revealed?

Take heart, faint soul! and stay the grief
In whose sad presence man e'er weeps;
Up through life's dark and shaded depths
Some bloom of beauty ever creeps.

Some rays of light, in darkness hid,
Wait God's appointed, better time,
To break in stars whose peaceful beams
Shall round our darkened pathway shine.

THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

I had a dream of bells one night,
Their ringing, O so strange and sweet!
My windows open wide I threw,
Their music marvelous to greet.

It came from out a great white star,
Like gate of heaven far away;
Has not God's city belfries tall
With chimes that ring each happy day?

A dream it was, for I awoke,
And all the shadowed room was still;
Yet not a dream, for there are days
This music seems my soul to thrill.

When echo words of right good-will,
The truth when one may bravely say,
If righteous cause a triumph win, —
The bells of Heaven ring that day!

For love and truth and righteousness
Make music that is sweeter far
Than bells which angel hands may ring
High in the belfry of a star.

THE SMELL OF THE SEA

How hot the streets, and close as cells!
What scent of docks all bare of tide!
At twilight, lo! a great, gray door
Down by the sea seems opened wide!

What smell of sand and brine and fog
Is in the wind with sweep so free!
Life's chalice to the brim is filled
With strength and hope poured from the sea.

An organ-note of praise is heard
In murmurs of the somber pine,
While merry is that censor grave,
The curfew-bell at drowsy nine.

At midnight, angels looking round
For pleasant news in heaven to tell,
Low answer with a sweet "Amen"
The lonely watchman's "All is well!"

THE OLD TIDE MILL

Listen, boys! Hark, every one!
Round and round the mill-wheels go,
Throwing off the foam like snow,
Wheels revolving like the sun.
From the hopper drops the corn,
Golden as the skies of morn,
Such as fills fair Plenty's horn,
Now the grinding is begun.

While the waters frothing run,
Lessons by the mill are taught,
Lessons all with meaning fraught.
Is there duty not begun?
O'er the past no longer brood,
Only toil will bring us food:
Work till all your task be done.

Slowly sinks the western sun,
Round and round the mill-wheels go,
As if tired, turning slow.
From the sea the waters run
Till the flats deep covered are,
And the lamp of lighthouse far
Burns across the frothing bar.
Let us go, the grinding done.

TENTING BY THE SEA

The shadow of a tent I saw,
Along the sloping sand.
A tent upon a headland high,
That bulwark of the land.

By day I heard the campers' laugh;
And when the evening star
Shone soft above the sea's dark rim
Like light of lighthouse far, —

How jubilant the sweep of song
That burst from out that tent,
A song to which the roaring sea
Its bass, deep-sounding, lent.

To-day that tent is gone! It left
No trace upon the sand.
A lonely sky is overhead;
Below, a lonely land.

And yet the campers' song goes on;
It sounds along the shore.
I hear it in the snowy surf
That breaks in wild uproar.

Life is a tent, a transient tent,
Do not we often say?
A shadow on the stretching sand,
So swift we pass away.

To-night I sit alone and hear
The songs my dead did sing,
And in mine ear their voices clear
Will never cease to ring.

The song of deeds by souls that went
Like saints in garments white,
Of honest speech, of highest aims,
That sought and found the light.

O vanished tent of pilgrim lives,
So transient by the sea,
What though the singer must pass on,
The song shall stay with me.

THE BATTLE-FRONT

At Life's hard battle-front — oh, hark!
Sweet calls to faith, God's bugles blow.
And look, your help from Heaven has come,
God's angels in their robes of snow.

And One there is who leads the fight,
Not mortal like the sons of men;
God's deathless Son brings on the charge!
Up, all, the battle press again!

ADVENT WINDS

The winds of Advent, how they rage!
They lift their voice and roar
Far up the cliffs, far o'er the plains,
Along the frozen shore.

But in the fissure of that crag
The bird that folds its wings
Fears not these driving, wintry blasts, —
It lifts its voice and sings!

Oh, Advent storms, 'mid all your rage
I catch that trumpet's blast
Which says the judgment day is nigh,
And things that shall be last!

Fear not, my soul, that dreadful day!
A Rock was cleft for thee, —
The arms of Christ thy Hiding-place,
Safe sheltered shalt thou be.

THE LITTLE SHIPS IN THE AIR

Flakes of snow with sails so white,
Drifting down the wintry skies,
Tell us where your route begins,
Say which way your harbor lies?

“In the clouds, the roomy clouds,
Arching earth with shadowy dome,
There’s the port from which we sail,
There is tiny snowflake’s home.”

And the cargo that you take
From those cloudy ports above —
Is it always meant to bless,
Sent in anger or in love?

“Warmth for all the tender roots,
Warmth for every living thing,
Water for the rivers’ flow,
This the cargo that we bring.”

Who’s the master that you serve,
Bids you lift your tiny sails,
Brings you safely to the earth,
Guides you through the wintry gales?

“He who tells the birds to sing,
He who sends the April showers,
He who ripens all the fruit,
That great Master, He is ours.”

WHERE CHRISTMAS ANGELS SING

Oh listen all! and can you hear
Above the fields so bare,
A song that climbs the starry heights,
A song of angels fair?
Not there, not there, the angels sing
Above the pastures brown,
No note will reach the stars that shine
Upon the shepherd town.
But in our homes, this very hour
They fold each shining wing
If we forgive, forget, and love;
'Tis there the angels sing.
And where the Church's altars rise
To hold the offering
We make to send "Good News" afar,
'Tis there the angels sing.
And where in cold and hungry homes
The gifts that you may bring
Shed golden warmth, give Christmas cheer,
'Tis there the angels sing.
And where you kneel this happy day
And give your dearest thing —
This heart — to Christ of Bethlehem,
'Tis there the angels sing.

MY DEAR ONES

So brittle the thread that holds them,
So many the threats that come
To sever the cord that joins us,
My soul with terror is dumb.

For death is the knife that severs —
What prophet can tell the time —
At midnight, or blush of morning,
Dividing their forms from mine.

But cease, O my soul, your sorrow,
And see! through your tears that flow,
A splendor, as when through showers
Their breaketh the sun's bright glow.

For there in a home so sheltered
My treasures I'll surely see,
And death — 'twill be but the angel
Restoring them all to me.

A NEW YEAR'S NEED

I have, dear Lord, this New Year's need
To find some lowly task
That is not helped by name or wealth,
That does not honors ask.

Give me a mind for wayside nooks
Where I may sow and till,
Content if I may cut one sheaf
And humble granary fill.

I do not ask to rule the fold,
But keep its lowly door;
To homeward urge the flock, or seek
The lamb lost on the moor.

Give me a mind to know Thy mind,
To seek Thy blessed will,
And finding that, low at Thy feet
Forever hold me still.

ALMOST HOME

Almost home! the day is nigh,
Oh, see the signs of dawning!
All through the cloudy eastern sky
Is flashed the glow of morning.

Almost home! The way was long,
Through days and nights how dreary!
But see the gates, the pearly goal
Of pilgrim feet so weary!

Almost home! Beyond the storm
I hear my dear ones calling!
I see the hands that beckon me
Through death's chill mists now falling.

Almost home! No pain, no tears,
No selfish will, — oh, never;
But only God's sweet, blessed will
And Christ's dear face forever!

THE CHRISTMAS GUEST

Cold, cold the night; white, white the snow
Sharp flashing in the icy moon;
And who as host will shelter give
My Lord and King who cometh soon?

No room for him in all these homes
That are ablaze with festal cheer?
A palace each, but not one couch
For him whose advent draweth near?

No host, no house? Rise up, my soul,
Thou hast a chamber in this breast!
Make clean the room, set wide the door;
Thy King shall be thy Christmas guest.

THE PILGRIM IN THE VALLEY

O traveler, stay, one moment stay!
The gathering storm of death is near.
Refresh thy needy, fainting soul
With bread I offer for thy cheer.
Yes, pilgrim, rest, lay down thy staff!
This sacred cup of blessing take.
The night is dark, the valley near;
God send thee peace for Jesus' sake!
Art thou in haste, must journey on?
Then Jesus, Shepherd, go with thee!
He leads His flock the valley through,
Thy God, thy guide till death will be.
Not long the road, though rough and dark;
'Twill safely home all pilgrims bring,
And at the valley's end there shines
The palace gateway of the King.
Oh, palace built by love divine,
With banquet hall and rooms of rest,
While saints of every age will rise
And sing thy welcome, happy guest!
Be not afraid — give Christ thy fear!
Upon thy brow that cross is bright
With which the Shepherd marks his own.
The night is short, dear soul — good night!

AT LAST

Rest, tired feet, oh, rest!
Earth's journey now is done,
And pilgrims lose their load
At set of crimson sun.

The stones and thorns gave pain,
But Heaven hath its balm.
Thine was the mountain-path,
It reached the Vale of Calm.

We stay thee not, but ask
Within thy love a place,
And at the Sunset Gate
The welcome of thy face.

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